

JANUARY 23, 2020

TO THE ROCKPORT PLANNING BOARD:

RE: ROCKPORT HARBOR HOTEL

The following individuals support this letter:

Respectfully,

James Anderson, Rockport
Samantha Appleton, Rockport
Katherine Grealish, Rockport
Deniz Ovecoglu, Rockport
John Priestley, Rockport
Craig Sweeny, Rockport
Tori Willauer, Rockport

JANUARY 23, 2020

TO THE ROCKPORT PLANNING BOARD:

RE: ROCKPORT HARBOR HOTEL

In respect to the hearing last month, the Planning Board proposed that the Town's parking survey be updated to potentially illustrate the sufficiency of public parking nearby. However, this exercise is meaningless as it does not calculate the number of parking spaces required by all of the businesses, public facilities, and residences within the survey area. For example, as previously presented, the occupancies from Shepherd Block to Union Hall require 170 off-street spaces per LUO, the applicant's submission (December 11, 2019) identifies a short fall of another 121 off-street spaces, the Opera House seats 425 persons upstairs plus another 50+/- downstairs, the Rockport Library Site Plan fails to meet its required parking – even without counting the other businesses/residences that have inadequate off-street parking, the number of parking spaces required is clearly well above the 348 public spaces available. Factoring in the 50 to 60 spaces that are unavailable for more than half the year due to Town float, ramp, and boat storage plus snow removal limitations, the number of public parking spaces is clearly inadequate to accommodate current occupancies, thus offering no reserve to add the additional parking burden of the proposed hotel and restaurants.

Also at last month's hearing, the Planning Board neglected to include the off-street parking requirements for the "Martin Block" (currently "Sea Folk" coffee shop plus residence). The LUO requires 17 off-street parking spaces for this building (see accompanying tally). Thus, taking the Planning Board's assignment of 28 spaces for the Shepherd Block, plus 17 for the Martin Block, adds up to 45 required off-street parking spaces. The applicant, in previous testimony, claimed to need "a couple" of spaces to be left open for hotel guest drop-off and valet operations. Thus, of the 49 off-street spaces in this application, a total of two (2) off-street parking spaces are available for the entire hotel and restaurant use.

At last month's hearing, the Planning Board based its parking calculations on previous Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals determinations that Union Hall required zero (0) off-street parking spaces. This current Planning Board assigned 28 of the existing off-street spaces to the Shepherd Block, plus zero to Union Hall, with the claim that the remaining 21 spaces could be attributed to the proposed hotel. This is an incorrect and misleading calculation. Union Hall was not exempted from provision of any off-street parking; the action of that previous Planning Board was to recognize that all reasonable off-street parking (52 spaces) had already been provided by the (previous) developer and was available to support the parking required for Union Hall. Please refer to submitted documents. To examine from another perspective, it would be absurd for anyone to claim that Union Hall requires no parking spaces since it contains a performance hall, a restaurant, residence, and other occupancies.

Additionally, the previous Planning Board had its hands tied in respect to the parking determination: all of the buildings were in existence, were "grandfathered", and the developer had demonstrated good faith in constructing the maximum number of spaces the land could support. The Planning Board had no choice but to modify the LUO off-street parking requirements; had they not, some of those buildings would have to remain unoccupied. The current proposal for a hotel is entirely different, in that the applicant proposes to construct a sizable new structure – and simultaneously to remove three (3) existing off-street parking spaces.

The Zoning Board of Appeals approval for Union Hall was predicated on the parking requirements for a 40-seat restaurant; that approval records clearly "APPROVED WITH CONCERN ABOUT PARKING". The Planning Board approval of Union Hall was predicated on the parking requirements for a 50-seat restaurant. The current restaurant, Nina June, seats 94; that represents an increase of 44 seats which equates to an additional 15 off-street parking spaces – beyond what was approved.

Even before this growth in downtown activity necessitating additional parking, please note that both the Town's Police Chief and Public Works Director recorded concerns with parking in the Union Hall Site Plan Pre-Application, which also accompanies this submission.

Turning to LUO Section 1003 (1), the requirement for proposed development is that "Structures shall impede as little as reasonably practical, scenic views from the main road or from existing structures and nearby undeveloped areas." The submitted images illustrate the specific conditions pertaining to this proposed development:

- 1) The View from the Main Road,
- 2) The Existing Structure with Scenic Views, and
- 3) The View from the Nearby Undeveloped Area (Goodridge Park).

It is irrefutable that the proposed structure would block 100% of these scenic views, from each of the three LUO listed perspectives. In other words, the proposed structure would impede the scenic views to the greatest extent possible. But the LUO requires that "Structures shall impede...scenic views...as little as reasonably practical...." On the basis of its imposition on scenic views, the proposed hotel does not satisfy the requirements of Rockport's LUO.

All of the aforementioned facts and observations reflect considerations specifically required to be satisfied by a potential development, per Town of Rockport LUO. What the LUO does not stipulate is for the Planning Board to bend or waive the rules to accommodate the business interests of an individual developer. Despite any personal enthusiasm for a specific project or for business growth in general, each Planning Board member is required to dispassionately uphold the terms and intent of the LUO, which embodies our collective goal to protect the safety, convenience, historic character, and scenic beauty for all members of our community.

Rockport Building Ordinance Off-Street Parking Requirements for EXISTING Occupancies

Union Hall

B (14) Business
1st (31) Restaurant (94 seats)
2nd (06) Assembly
3rd (02) Apartment
(53) Total Off-Street Parking Spaces Required

Martin Block (Sea Folk)

B and 1st (15) Restaurant (44 seats)
2nd and 3rd (02) Apartment
(17) Total Off-Street Parking Spaces Required

Shepherd Block

B (15) Office
1st (33) Restaurant (100 seats)
(10) Retail
2nd (21) Office
3rd (21) Office
(100) Total Off-Street Parking Spaces Required

Total for Current occupancies: 170 Off-Street Parking Spaces

Total current available: 52 Off-Street Parking Spaces (includes (2) HCAP)

Current Deficit: 118 Off-Street Parking Spaces

Rockport Zoning Board of Appeals

Notice of Public Hearing

Date: Tuesday June 19, 2012
Time: 7:30 p.m. ◀Note Time
Place: Rockport Opera House

I New Business

- A. Application of **Pen Bay Ice Co., Inc.**, represented by Kim Graffam, for **Section 901.3(22) special exception review to operate Graffam Brother's Seafood Shack Restaurant** on a parcel identified as Map 30, Lot 107 and located at 210 Union St. in District 901.
- B. Application of **Rockport Properties LLC**, represented by Landmark Inc., for **Section 913.3(13) special exception review to operate a restaurant in a portion of Union Hall** on a parcel identified as Map 29, Lot 297 and located at 23 Central St. in District 913.

APPROVED W/ CONCERN ABOUT PARKING. 4-0

II Other Business

- A. Future roster of the Zoning Board of Appeals

*Applications and supporting documentation are available
for public review at the Rockport Planning and Community Development Office*

801.1 Soils and Erosion Control - All site work will be subject to an erosion and sedimentation control plan prepared by a Licensed Professional Engineer. No DEP permitting is required.

801.2 Removal of Earth Materials - No topsoil is planned for removal from the site, however some existing concrete and asphalt may be removed from the site during construction. The removal of concrete and asphalt is not planned for commercial resale purposes, but rather in conjunction with creating site improvements.

801.3 Water Quality - All wastewater will be discharged via the existing sewer service connections.

801.4 Surface and Stormwater Drainage - All stormwater drainage will be safely conveyed to Rockport Harbor following existing flow paths. Any stormwater improvements will be coordinated with the downstream abutter, Rockport Marine.

801.5 Clearcutting - Does not apply

801.6 Nuisances - The proposed restaurant does not anticipate any nuisances due to noise, smell, or sight. The applicant will work with their solid waste disposal contractor hauler to minimize any possible nuisance smells from restaurant waste. Waste dumpsters serving this restaurant will be relocated from directly behind Union Hall to a more remote site at the east end of the adjacent parking lot. No playing of amplified music that can be heard beyond the property line is anticipated. As stated in Section 703.3.8 above, heavy equipment use, which is only anticipated during renovations and site construction, will be limited to the hours between 6:30 AM and 6:30 PM.

801.7 Lighting - No lights will be directed at any portion of the public way and no rotating or flashing lights will be used. Exterior lighting for walkways and entrances is planned. All exterior lighting fixtures will be directed downward and so as not to direct unnecessary or undesirable light onto adjacent properties.

801.8 Exposed Areas - Does not apply

802. Industrial Standards - Does not apply

803. Traffic Circulation, Access, and Street Design - Vehicular and pedestrian circulation is provided to Union Hall by a combination of private and public ways. This restaurant will have shared access to the rear parking lot which is planned for expansion. A large amount of public parking exists along Central and Main Streets from the Opera House to the Pascal Avenue bridge. These public and private spaces all offer safe pedestrian access via sidewalks and crosswalks to the Union Hall. According to a town study, within a half mile radius of the village, there are 348 public spaces available during the summer season.

The proposed restaurant plans to have approximately 40 seats and the ordinance requires 1 space per 3 seats, which yields 14 required spaces for the restaurant

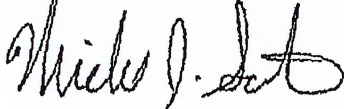
use. A 25-space expansion of the parking lot to the rear of the building is planned. Union Hall tenants will have access to this parking area. Although the needs for the proposed tenants of the Union Hall may be met by the private parking available, we believe any demand on the parking in the Rockport Downtown District represents a boon, not a detriment, to this neighborhood.

- 804. Cluster Development – Does not apply
- 805. Lots – Does not apply
- 806. Livestock Control – Does not apply
- 807. Mobile Homes – Does not apply
- 808. Access Management – Does not apply
- 809. Wireless Telecommunications Facilities – Does not apply
- 810. Service Drops – Water service connections may have to be upgraded to accommodate the proposed uses, the applicant will coordinate with The Maine Water Company. An external grease trap will be installed to treat any wastewater from the restaurant use.. A new electrical service will be installed in the same general location as the existing service.
- 811. Home Occupations – Does not apply
- 812. Wind Energy Systems – Does not apply
- 813. Blasting Standards – No blasting is anticipated in conjunction with the renovations required for the restaurant. In the unlikely event that any blasting is necessary for installation of required infrastructure, permitting will be coordinated with the Town Planning Office and blasting will be conducted in accordance with the Ordinance.
- 814. Itinerant Peddlers – Does not apply

We look forward to discussing this project with you at your next meeting. If you have any questions please call our office.

Sincerely,

Landmark Corporation Surveyors & Engineers



Michael J. Sabatini, P.E.

cc: Rockport Properties, LLC
File

Rockport Planning Board Notice of Public Hearing

Date: Wednesday June 20, 2012
Time: 5:30 p.m. ◀ *Note Time*
Place: Rockport Opera House

Site Walks

PAWS – Animal Adoption Center – formally the Camden Rockport Animal Rescue League:
146 Camden St. – 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday June 20, 2012

I Old Business

- A. Application of **Melissa Spear Dove**, represented by Landmark Inc., for **final plan subdivision review for the proposed creation Lot 5 in the Maple Grove Subdivision** on a parcel identified as Map 35 Lot 71-1 and located adjacent to Park St. in District 908. *(continued from the 5.9.12 meeting)*
- B. Application of **PAWS – Animal Adoption Center** represented by Gartley and Dorsky, for a **site plan review to add a 4,973 sq. ft. addition to the existing building** on a parcel identified as Map 31, Lot 5 and located at 146 Camden St. in District 907. *(continued from the 5.9.12 meeting)*

II New Business

- A. Application of **Rockport Properties LLC** represented by Landmark Inc., for a **site plan pre-application meeting for a change of use in Union Hall (educational to commercial – restaurant, retail grocery)** on a parcel identified as Map 29, Lot 297 and located at 24 Central St. in District 913.

Applications and supporting documentation are available
for public review at the Planning and Community Development Office

**SITE PLAN REVIEW FORM
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

TO: ROCKPORT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

FROM: ROCKPORT PLANNING OFFICE/PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is currently reviewing a SITE PLAN application and would appreciate your comments regarding the proposed SITE PLAN and it's effect on public ways.

SITE PLAN NAME: Union Idool

LOCATION: 24 Central St.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: change of use

Please check the appropriate response and offer any relevant comments.

- #2 ☒ Existing roads can adequately handle increase in proposed area.
- ☒ Will existing road need upgrading? (If yes, please explain below)
- #3 ☒ Proposed roads will not offer any significant problem. (Inclusive of maintenance and plowing).
- ☒ Access from proposed roads to existing roads appears to be designed for safety.

☐ I would like to discuss the proposed Site Plan with the Board.

Comments of Recommendations:

#2 Some Side Walk Improvements will be necessary

#3 Parking after Business hours will have to be enforced

Planning Board meeting date: 6-20-12

Stephen E. Bawer
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

JUNE 13 2012
DATE

**SITE PLAN REVIEW FORM
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

TO: ROCKPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

FROM: ROCKPORT PLANNING OFFICE AND PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is currently reviewing the attached Site Plan. Please provide input on this Plan relative to the performance standards of Section 1305 of the Rockport Land Use Ordinance.

SITE PLAN NAME: Union Hall

LOCATION: 24 Central St.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: change of use

Please check the appropriate response and offer any relevant comments.

☐ I anticipate no significant problem with the proposal.

☒ I would like to discuss the proposed Site Plan with the Board.

Comments of Recommendations:

"Parking" is of great concern AS you can see by or only restaurant on Central St. New "parking" could and most likely will be a concern

Planning Board meeting date: 6-20-12

Mark G. Kelley 6/12/12
POLICE CHIEF DATE

OFFICE COPY

**Rockport Planning Board
Notice of Public Hearing**

Date: Wednesday August 8, 2012
Time: 5:30 p.m. ◀ *Note Time*
Place: Rockport Opera House

I Old Business

- A. Application of **Rockport Properties LLC**, represented by Landmark Inc., for **site plan review for a change of use in Union Hall (educational to commercial – restaurant, retail grocery)** on a parcel identified as Map 29, Lot 297 and located at 24 Central St. in District 913. (*continued from the 6.20.12 and 7.11.12 meetings*)

APPROVED

1305.3 Vehicular Access

Because the property has existing access onto Main Street, a new Access Permit is not required from the Town of Rockport or the Maine DOT.

1305.4 Parking and Circulation

This standard pertains to layout and design of vehicular and pedestrian circulation. We believe the proposed sidewalk improvements on the Union Hall property and on the town's right-of-way represent a significant improvement to the existing conditions, which currently lack a clear walking path. The current conditions provide no defined access to Central Street, Main Street, Union Hall, the parking lot known as "Sandy's Way" or the recently constructed steps to the Harbor Path. The proposed improvements connect all of these and do so with separation from street traffic.

Because this is a change of use Site Plan review on a grandfathered non-conforming lot with no room for private parking, we believe the parking standard cannot be applied to this specific lot. However, the reality is that if new uses are to succeed, parking is needed. As a result, additional parking for Union Hall and the applicant's other properties along Central Street has been provided in a previously approved Site Plan Amendment for the Shepherd Block.

Of the uses that are changing within Union Hall, the expected parking needs are as follows:

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Restaurant (50 seats @ 1 sp/3 seats) | 17 spaces |
| Third Floor (two dwelling units or office) | 4 – 8 spaces |
| Basement Floor (office 1200 sf) | <u>6 spaces</u> |
| Total | 27-31 spaces |

These parking needs will almost entirely be satisfied within the parking lot expansion mentioned above, which will provide an additional 25 spaces. Municipal parking along the street and at the harbor will satisfy the excess parking demand.

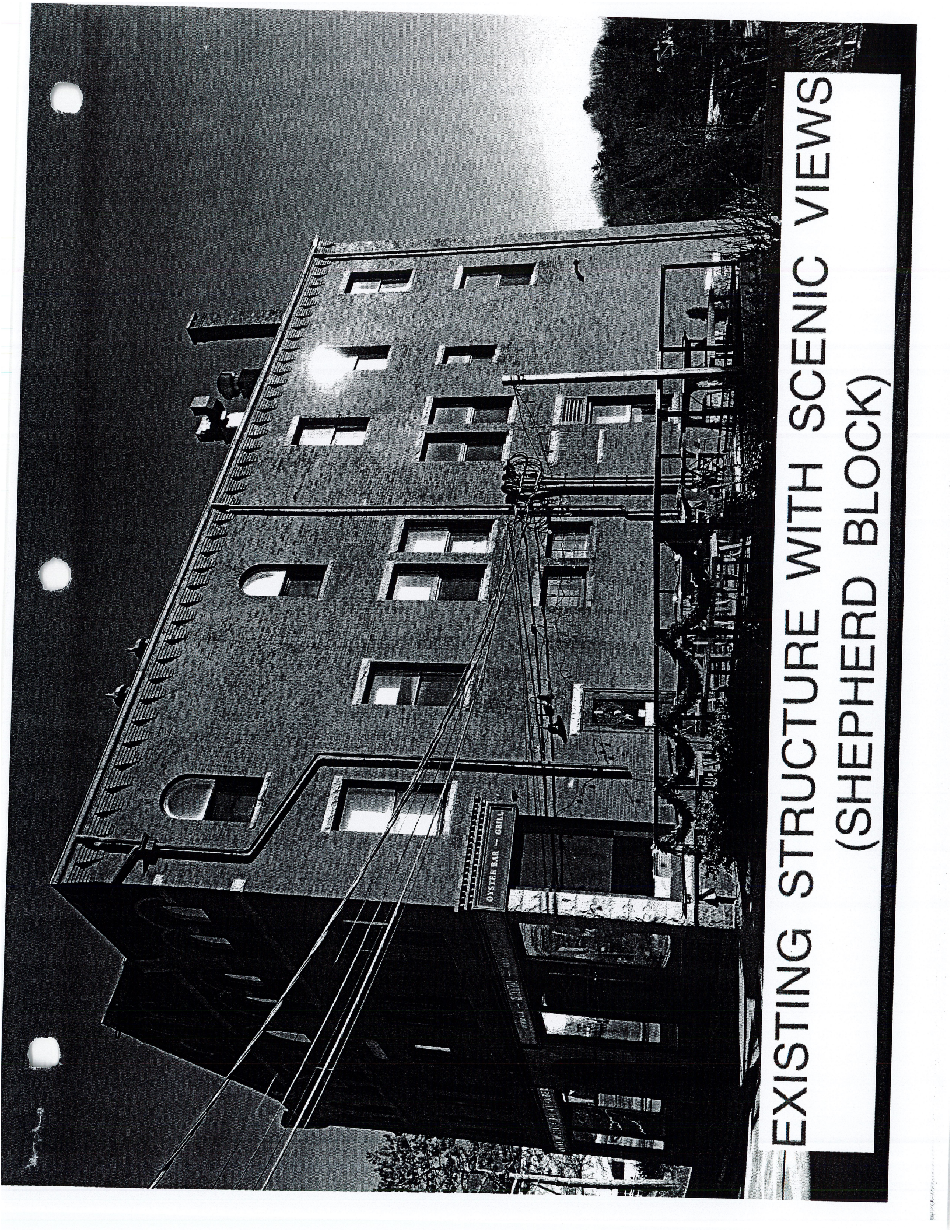
The second floor space, "Union Hall" is a grandfathered use and parking will be taken care of on a "per event" basis, similar to the Opera House. Based on above and especially due to the creation of badly needed pedestrian-friendly access to the building, we believe this standard is easily met or exceeded by the plan.

1305.5 Surface Water Drainage

No changes to existing stormwater drainage patterns are proposed in this project, however we do propose improvement to existing stormwater conveyance. This proposed improvement consists of directing gutter downspouts beneath sidewalks directly to curb lines, including the existing downspouts on Central Street that serve

VIEW FROM MAIN ROAD (CENTRAL ST.)





EXISTING STRUCTURE WITH SCENIC VIEWS
(SHEPHERD BLOCK)

A black and white photograph of a street scene. On the left, a multi-story brick building with several windows is visible. A utility pole with wires runs across the middle of the frame. On the right, a dark-colored car is parked. In the background, there are trees and a body of water under a bright sky. The text "VIEW FROM UNDEVELOPED AREA (PARK)" is printed vertically on the right side of the image.

VIEW FROM UNDEVELOPED AREA (PARK)

My name is David Barry my address is 8 Church Street. This property includes 128 feet of frontage on Central street.

I am strongly in favor of the two petitions listed below

First petition - No hotel in our small downtown (including the 26 -suite Smith hotel that the Planning Board just approved) should be more than 20 rooms. Our small downtown cannot support hotels larger than this size due to parking, traffic, safety concerns, etc. A 20 room hotel would add to the tax rolls without blocking scenic views of the Harbor and overwhelming the scale of our small downtown.

Second petition: The Planning Board should not waive current requirements for new businesses downtown to create off street parking spaces for customers without first requiring an independent study paid for by the business, to assess any traffic, parking or safety burdens that might result. (In order to protect residents' interests, the Planning Board needs to rely on **independent** information provided by qualified professionals, not just the opinion of the business owner or a Town official or employee.)

Secondly I object to the proposed ordinances 803.1 803.4 and 1004. These appear to be proposed for the sole benefit of the developer rather than for general good of the town. I am also concerned at consistent attempts to limit public comment while still allowing the developer to make a long presentation.

I would appreciate it if you would make my feelings known to the various boards concerned. I do hope that the town rejects the end run that appears to be taken to cater to the sole interest of the developer.

David Barry

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Dear Bill, I would like to express my opposition to the revised ordinances concerning the hotel and parking. Once again the Town of Rockport appears to be seeking support for the privileged few while promoting inequities facing Rockport as a whole. I am very concerned that the direction Rockport has taken these past few years, particularly concerning the library and the main street of town, serves to discount our most valuable resource of all- the natural environment. In a time which demands recognition of diversity, I am watching Rockport serve the elite once again.

Marti Stone

marti stone photography
www.martistonephotography.com
PO Box 1017
Rockport, ME 04856
207-236-3151

Hello Bill,

I have learned that you will read citizen comments into the hearing this evening. Would you please include the remarks below?

"The SB has based their push to eliminate parking requirements downtown upon what is demonstrably a national trend. However, they have failed to consider: 1) Most downtowns have public transportation 2) Most downtowns have sufficient density that many residents do not require cars (which is not true of our area) 3) Most downtowns have rideshare, communal bicycles, Uber, and the like, which we do not 4) Most downtowns have public parking structures and parking lots (Portland has dozens for example).

Further, what is happening nationally does not supersede our local needs and preferences. The current shortfall of street parking in downtown Rockport is an established fact. Current downtown business owners have complained that the lack of parking today negatively affects their respective businesses.

With all due respect, not one member of the Select Board, the Planning Board, nor Select Board cited "expert" Steve Smith is a traffic engineer, parking expert, nor professional consultant in this area of study. Proposing scattered revisions to our Land Use Ordinance is a piecemeal approach, and gives the appearance of being rushed through to benefit the proposed downtown hotel.

Changes to the Land Use Ordinance of this consequence should be postponed until the services of a qualified parking consultant can be utilized for a comprehensive and informed

rework of the relevant passages of our Land Use Ordinance. It is only by this means that we can ensure the successful future development and prosperity of our downtown.”

If you don't mind, I request your acknowledgment of receipt and willingness to read this statement into the record.

With appreciation,
John

John W. Priestley 3rd AIA
Priestley + Associates Architecture
23 Central Street - PO Box 424 - Rockport, ME 04856
Rockport (207) 236-7745 Boston, MA (617) 936-0303

~ AIA Maine Honor Award Winner ~

Hi Bill... Malcolm and Barbara Brooks here.

We understand that there are proposed ordinances concerning eliminating parking requirements, eliminating design processes for roads, and eliminating landscaping requirements for parking areas.

Please do nothing, do not vote, do not decide, without careful, independent study.

We understand that there are petitions to keep the hotel limited to 20 rooms and to request independent studies on parking changes. Those petitions make sense to us and we support them.

Thanks for all you do for us as residents. The quality of life here depends on you.

Yours with appreciation and hope,

Malcolm and Barbara

--

Malcolm and Barbara Brooks
191 Beauchamp Point Road
Rockport, Maine 04856
207 701 1441

Katrinka Wilder
P.O. Box 224
Rockport ME 04856
trink@wilder.com

To: the Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals, The Select Board, and the Planning Board.

From: Katrinka Wilder, resident since 1978 at 15 Amsbury Street, Rockport

I am unhappy about the proposed revised ordinance to eliminate off-street parking requirements in the downtown district.

Parking is already a problem and has steadily increased over the many years I have lived here. The two existing restaurants and coffee shop – and I delight in having them here – plus all the other activities that call for parking have made it essential that the parking problem needs a complete review, *done by disinterested parties*, before accepting the proposed ordinance.

I think it's necessary that permission for parking – and especially the ordinance to eliminate ALL parking requirements in the district – be rethought. A hotel of more than 20 beds would aggravate the situation enormously.

Please do not go steaming ahead with a proposal that could clog the downtown area even more than it already is!

At 89 years old, I still care deeply about this lovely village, its access, and its appearance.

Thank you.

Katrinka Wilder

June 11, 2020

To the MEMBERS OF THE Zoning Board of Appeals, Select Board, and Planning Board:

I am writing about the proposed hotel and restaurants and bar on Central Street in Rockport.

My husband, Throop Wilder, and I have had a house on Amsbury Hill in Rockport for more than twenty years, my mother, until she died this winter, lived on Amsbury Hill for thirty years, and my mother-in-law has lived on Amsbury Hill for forty years.

Parking has been a sore issue for the town for as long as anyone can remember. Lack of parking was one of the reasons that the Center for Maine Contemporary Art left Rockport. One iteration of plans for the Rockport Library was voted down, in part because it did not provide enough parking to satisfy the residents of the town. But there has been no objective and thorough review of the impact that a hotel and two restaurants and a bar will have on a short street whose capacity is already maxed out by the two existing restaurants and the coffee shop, not to mention the additional cars and traffic whenever there is an event at the Rockport Opera House or at Marine Park.

Pascal Avenue, Central Street, and Union Street are extremely busy and overused already. They are the cutoff to Camden, the way to avoid the stop sign in front of the Stop and Go. We all use it. I can tell you, because our house is above Pascal Ave., that traffic—cars and smaller trucks and trailer trucks and construction vehicles—begins in earnest at 5:30 am and continues well into the evening. The noise is impressive. We wear earplugs to sleep. Despite periodic protests from the many people who live on Pascal Ave. and in the center of Rockport, nothing has been done to keep heavy trucks and many cars off those roads. Cars from the hotels and restaurants and bar will increase the number of vehicles.

I walk on these streets every day; the traffic, even in the middle of winter, is impressive. In the summer, it is sometimes worth your life to cross the street. It seems that it is only prudent to reevaluate the size of the hotel and the need for more parking places and accommodations for increased traffic before any kinds of

permissions can be issued. I am also concerned that this project is moving ahead without many opportunities for public review. This is a building that is going to transform the heart of the town, both with its physical presence and with the increase in traffic it will cause.

I am curious about why a series of reviews has not occurred, and I am also curious about why the town's leaders have not required an impact study. The least we can do, as responsible citizens, is to understand the project's implications and make sure that it is the best way to preserve our very beautiful community for the future.

Thank you.

Deborah Weisgall

Dear Mr. Post:

I am unable to attend the meeting today but want you to know my thoughts about the proposed revised ordinances. The revisions are designed to favor a few who will profit financially while hindering solid citizens of our community from making a living and contributing to our tax base. A disproportionate share of taxes is being spent in the Village already, and passing these ordinances will add to the inequities. Rockport is losing its way despite it's natural beauty, good schools, access to amazing non-profits and cultural opportunities. The town is increasingly divided and has become less welcoming and inclusive. This will hurt Rockport in the long run and tax revenues will fall, not rise. Please do your best to limit the damage by stating your opposition to these revised ordinances. They are grossly unfair!

Nanci-Ames Curtis, MD

West Rockport

Dear Mr. Post

I cannot attend the meeting tomorrow but I'm writing this letter to voice my concerns on how our city officials are proceeding concerning the proposed hotel.

The Smiths may own a lot of Rockport but they don't own us, the residents. It is obvious that most recent proposed revised ordinances are constructed to benefit the Smiths and whatever plans they have for Rockport. These come at the expense of many residents and other business owners... food trucks, people who run Airbnbs to name a few. Rather than making them comply, they are simply being rewritten.

This town is not Smithville yet. It is Rockport. We love our town. We love its beauty. We value our independence. We don't want our streets to be unsafe for us because of traffic. We want to be free to run our businesses. We do not want to be a company town. What is it that would make you forsake us for people who's hotels ignore local architecture and run frankly bad restaurants? People who would rather not comply with rules that govern the beauty of our town only to make it easier for them to have parking lots that have no requirements for the way they look and who want the system rigged for them against others who have businesses here.

If you go forward with all this we will know that you cannot be trusted to protect us from future plans the Smiths have for Rockport no matter what they are. Making things easy for friends and business associates is not the job of city officials. Slipping things in, assuming we the residents will not notice is not the job they were elected to do. It is important to listen to the citizens petitions.

We do not object to development. Only to development that is geared to one family and against the rest. Guaranteeing the fortunes of the Smiths at the expense of residents and all other businesses, the beauty and standards of our town and the safety of its streets is a dereliction of the duty of these city officials. I bear no ill will toward the Smith family but there are valid concerns held by residents. Fair play is required.

Sincerely

Marika Kuzma Green

Hello Bill,

I hope you are faring well still through the coronavirus crisis. I am unable to attend the select board meeting tonight but do want to comment on some of the agenda items. As you know, I have a keen interest in the ongoing development at the head of the harbor, and have been disappointed with the seeming lack of enforcement of several elements of the land use ordinance with respect to the now approved development at 20 Central Street. I have signed the two citizen petitions on the agenda tonight, and I urge the select board to present the two petitions to the public for a vote as soon as practicable. I further encourage the select board to enable remote voting for these petitions and all votes as we slowly emerge from the coronavirus lockdown.

Since as the petitions conflict with much of the proposed ordinance revisions, I would further ask that the select board defer any action on the proposed revisions until the voters have been given a chance to voice their opinion on the two citizen petitions. I may be wrong, but changing ordinances in a select board meeting to conform with a pattern of waivers and prior disregard of said ordinances runs headlong into the logic, effort, and process required for ordinance changes by citizen initiative. Indeed, it seems most respectful of the will of the voters to put all changes to ordinances to a vote, regardless of the source of the proposed change.

Thank you for your help presenting this, and stay healthy –
Mark

Mark E. Schwarzmenn
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